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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SY](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: MCNS MARCH 9: SECURITY OPERATIONS IN MOSUL,
BADDUSH PRISON, RUSAFI RULE OF LAW CENTER, PROTECTION OF
LARGE CASH TRANSFERS

REF: A. BAGHDAD 00422
[B](#). BAGHDAD 00375
[C](#). BAGHDAD 00343
[D](#). BAGHDAD 00267

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

SUMMARY

[1](#). (S REL MNFI) LTG Jalal Tawfiq Riyadh, Ninewa Operations Command and former commander of the Iraqi Army 9th Division, presented a well-organized and thorough brief on preparatory measures for tackling Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in Ninewa province. The MCNS dealt again with instructions to the Ministry of Defense (MOD) for the Iraqi Army to provide protection for the movement of large amounts of currency from Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) to the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI) and from the CBI to Anbar Province. The Acting Minister of Justice, Safa al-Safi, presented his biased views on Baddush prison in Ninewa and the Rusafa Rule of Law Center (ROLC) in Baghdad. End
Summary.

Comprehensive Presentation

[2](#). (S REL MNFI) Most of the meeting was taken up by LTG Riyadh's presentation of steps taken thus far to prepare for operations against AQI in Ninewa. He made it clear that thorough preparations for the campaign must be in place so that military action against AQI will be fully successful once commenced. He presented the challenges and problems he had encountered since assuming command last month, noting the need to bring in new staff officers. He highlighted the importance of support for the police so that they could do their work both day and night, reminding the committee that, in the past, Mosul's police often abandoned their posts at night. He described the general disposition of his forces, with police in the center of the old city of Mosul, the 2nd Iraqi Army Division responsible for the remainder of the city and its outskirts, and the 3rd Iraqi Army Division responsible for western Ninewa to the Syrian border. He said he will need more forces to deal effectively with AQI. In all this, he underlined the urgency and importance of demonstrating strength and instilling confidence in the people of Mosul lest they cooperate with AQI out of fear that the government forces were too weak to protect them. He also stressed the importance of economic re-development for Mosul, which had been a wealthy area, to complement kinetic aspects of his counterinsurgency campaign. He wrapped up his introduction with mention of the human rights training his forces had received and a description of civil relations activities undertaken with Sheikhs, prominent citizens, and others to build trust between his forces and the local community.

Three-Phased Approach

¶3. (S REL MNFI) As he had previewed at the February 7 high-level Crisis Action Cell (ref. A), Riyadh described a three-phased approach to deal with AQI, insurgents, and other criminal actors in Mosul. Phase One, preparation and control of the battle space, is underway and is projected to last until May 2008. Thus far, Riyadh has overseen the re-distribution of forces, erection of checkpoints and road barriers, division of the Mosul area into areas of operation, protection of bridges and other key infrastructure, and intelligence collection operations. The checkpoints and back-road barriers support his efforts to direct all traffic onto the main roads, facilitating control of movement into and out of the area, in effect creating a line of control encircling the city. General David Petraeus, Commanding General Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I), noted that this is being called "the Riyadh line." Riyadh also noted that MNF-I had begun deploying forces to the most dangerous sections of the city and 7 Joint Security Stations had been established in Mosul. Riyadh also cited security problems at Baddush Prison and the serious need for investigative judges. The Acting Minister of Justice appeared to take exception to Riyadh's comments.

¶4. (S REL MNFI) Phase Two, the "Cleansing" or clearing operation, is expected to commence in May and last through the end of July. Riyadh made it clear that he would not be rushed into major clearing operations in Mosul, noting the importance of having the escape routes for AQI and other insurgents closed off before fully launching major operations. He requested an additional brigade of combat

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power and called for more personnel, adding that he was recruiting locals who wanted to serve.

¶5. (S REL MNFI) Phase Three, holding the areas cleared, is likely to be daunting. Riyadh emphasized the urgency of removing rubble and barriers and re-building as soon as the fighting was over. He also stressed the need to compensate and shelter returned refugees and IDPs, restore municipal services, especially electricity.

Committee Response

¶6. (S REL MNFI) PM Maliki told Riyadh that the GOI had promised last month (Ref. A) to support him and stood by that promise. Maliki asked if major clearing operations could begin before May and what the role of the citizens would be. Riyadh responded that the comprehensive plan, covering the region as well the city, should not be rushed. His forces were re-establishing trust with the citizenry, using tip lines to gather actionable information on malefactors. He added that the local Governor was supportive too.

¶7. (S REL MNFI) Minister of Interior Bulani underlined the importance of mobilizing the local citizens to provide useful intelligence to Riyadh's forces and deliver the municipal services essential to keeping the citizens on the GOI's side. Bulani also asked about coordination between the military and police, and Riyadh said that they were working side by side. Minister of Defense Abdel Qadr encouraged Riyadh to prioritize his targets to maximize his resources. Iraqi Ground Forces Commander echoed the PM's comment about giving Riyadh full support and priority. National Security Advisor (NSA) Muwaffaq al-Rubaie underscored the need for coordination of intelligence and a unified target list. Rubaie asked how Riyadh could get the people to support him as in an awakening movement. He also asked that a senior GOI representative be named, preferably one with ties to Mosul, to coordinate restoration of essential services.

CG's Intervention

¶8. (S REL MNFI) General Petraeus praised Riyadh's efforts and his deliberate plan for dealing with AQI and insurgent groups in Ninewa. He observed that because Mosul is vital for AQI, it will fight hard to retain its influence and bases of operations and support there. Through extortion, abductions, and other criminal activity, AQI is financing its operations at the cost of Mosul's security and development. GEN Petraeus added his voice to Riyadh's, Rubaie's, and others who had noted the absolute need to restore services to the citizens of Mosul to secure sustainable results. He called on the GOI to provide the Provincial council with more funds. Wrapping up, GEN Petraeus told the committee that LTG William Rollo, the Deputy Commanding General, MNF-I, would coordinate with Iraqi partners the restoration of essential services to Mosul, and he asked for the name of his Iraqi counterpart. (Note: After the meeting, Rubaie indicated the Iraqi co-coordinator for service restoration would be announced at the March 16 MCNS. End Note.)

PM's Wrap-up

¶9. (S REL MNFI) The PM wrapped up by reminding the committee of the importance of this campaign in Mosul, calling on MOI and MOD to provide Riyadh the needed resources and encouraging outreach to the citizens. He counseled against further public statements lest expectations be raised precipitously or plans revealed to the enemy. In response to Riyadh's question concerning use of the Peshmerga, PM showed no interest in having them under the command of the Ninewa Operations Command.

Baddush Prison

¶10. (S REL MNFI) Acting Minister of Justice Safa al-Safi presented a litany of troubles with Baddush prison (Ninewa province) and steps he was taking to fix them, including bringing in 160 new guards, transferring out unreliable guards, and appointing a new prison director. In an abrupt shift of topic, he mentioned that his staff was seeking information on the attack on the prison and resulting breakout of prisoners. GEN Petraeus corrected MOJ's deliberate mis-characterizations of events, noting that those prisoners were released by their guards and that the shackles of prisoners on the bus transporting them had been undone by their guards. Only the intervention of Coalition Forces had

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prevented a complete breakout.

Rusafa Rule of Law Complex

¶11. (S REL MNFI) Switching the issue to the Rusafa ROLC, al-Safi complained that money to sustain the complex had to be identified, calling for a working group to be formed to resolve the issue. He also complained that prisoners had escaped from Rusafa, hinting that it would not have occurred if the international guards had been Iraqi guards. Again correcting the mis-characterizations, GEN Petraeus reminded the MOJ that the prisoners had been released by interior guards, not those on the exterior of the complex. The PM intervened, instructing the MOJ to work with MNF-I to ensure the continued success of the ROLC and make it an example for other complexes throughout Iraq.

Protecting Cash Transfers

¶12. (S REL MNFI) MOD Abdel Qadr had opened the meeting with the statement that his ministry was not ready to take on the responsibility of securing the transfer of large amounts of

currency from BIAP to the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI) and from the CBI to Anbar. Rather than securing all currency transfers, GEN Petraeus noted that Coalition Forces only provided security for transfers from the BIAP to the CBI and from the CBI to Anbar. He added that the Iraqi Army had previously provided security for shipments from BIAP to the CBI and from the CBI to Diyala. GEN Petraeus observed that the deadline had been set for January 8 and recommended that a new deadline be set of 8 April. The PM instructed MOD to work with MNF-I to take over the responsibility. CG stated that MNF-I would assist the Ministry of Defense and would provide a weekly update on the subject to the MCNS.

Bio Note

¶13. (S REL MNFI) General Riyadh showed confidence and self-assurance throughout the meeting. He opened his presentation with prayers somewhat more extensive than the perfunctory opening prayer used most often to begin Iraqi government meetings. He also portrayed a strong Iraqi national, vice sectarian, identity when he stated that identification cards for his forces would not identify religion. When he suggested that Peshmerga forces be placed under his command, he did so in a matter of fact manner, consistent with a view that as Iraqis they could be employed to assist the Iraqi Security Forces if needed. End Bio Note. CROCKER